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She speaks similarly of peyote:

That peyote is a real good medicine. They call it . . . some of the Indians call it a sacrament like white peoples who are Christians. God gave that peyote to the Indians to help them when they got sickness. I learned how to use that peyote a lot of ways. You ain't supposed to take it and think you go crazy. No! It's a medicine and that's the way I use it. Peyote gives me power to make people well.

When speaking of her supernatural patron, the eagle, she says:

The eagle got more power then anything living, I guess. Its got Medicine to help people get well . . . to cure them. I got power like that eagle because the eagle help me when I call on it when I doctor. My mother told me that I be just like that eagle when I doctor. I can feel the eagle working in me when I doctor and try hard to get somebody well. Feels like that eagle tell me in my mind to go ahead and fix that person up . . . get him well.

However, though she utilizes elements of peyotism and Christianity, she has little sympathy for the organized forms of these religions. This is especially true with regard to Christianity.

The way I know is, when I went to Christian church up there, many, many years back I found out some things. Like when you get hard up, or when you get sick in the family, they ain't going to help you. They don't come. They don't say, "Let's have a prayer meeting for you. Let's do that." They don't say that to you. They really tight. They don't spare nothing with you. I still pray like that, but I'm not going to their church for nothing.

She speaks of the Native American Church:

They say I supposed to sign my name to belong to that Native Church. I told them that I wasn't going to do that. I been using that medicine for long as I know it, and my mother before me, and her father before her and way, way back like that. I don't have to belong to nothing to use that medicine. We hold meetings here on our place but I ain't going nowhere else around here to peyote meeting. That medicine belong to anybody that needs it and you don't have to belong to the church that they set up if you want to use it.

White Contact

Sanapia's first extensive contact with white society came when she began her schooling at the age of seven at Cache Creek Mission School in southern Oklahoma. She remembers the seven years she spent at Cache Creek as generally pleasant.

I really did enjoy that school. I like it. The teachers . . . every one of them and our superintendent were all missionaries. They were really nice people. They teach us the bible. All the girls and boys go up there and they teach us all these bible stories and they question us out of the bible to see if we really read it.

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115 They teach us the men. We all sitting around there. When she tell us how
159 Jesus was born, we just laugh and act silly and our matron would say, "Don't
177 laugh." Then we ask her, "Did you see the baby?" You know, things like that
797 . . . the older girls and us ask her questions like that. We just laugh about it.
872 All the time we thought it was silly for them not to go and see the baby when
[212] it was born. Yeah, we learn how to write and learn how to spell, and arithmetic and whatever they learn us. We caught onto it. Then the government wrote a letter to our superintendent and said to send a bunch of them to Haskell in Kansas. And they sent a bunch of them over there and they went to school up there for about three years and they come back and they were grown and they all got married, but I didn't go. My mother wouldn't sign the papers and my dad wouldn't let me go. "No, we don't want her to go up there. She might run off or she'll freeze to death or somebody might kill her on the road." So a bunch of us girls, we didn't go. And a bunch of them went. My brothers went. They were younger than I and they went. And my mother said, "No, she's not going, but you boys could go. Boys are tougher than the girls." That what she told my brothers and so they went. I didn't care nothing about it either way.

During the summer vacations she would return to her home, which at that time was situated along Chandler Creek in Comanche County, Oklahoma.

I never did go places because we didn't have no places to go in them days . . . no cars or nothing. When we come out of school we just stay home all summer.
115 Help my father with the work and everything he's got. He had lots of crops. My
159 brothers cultivate that corn. I have to ride the horse for them and keep it on
241 the row because the corn was so high that the horse would keep eating back and forth and my father would make me ride that horse to keep him on that line so he won't be eating the tops of the corn. They take turns, three of my brothers, while I be riding that horse all day, all day. In the morning we go plow till noon and then we go to dinner and then we go back and plow again till we get through with it. My father used to teach us to work, you know.

115 It was during summer vacation prior to her last year at school that Sanapia's
159 mother offered to train her to become a doctor. Sanapia was reticent at first, but
593 combined pressure from her mother and maternal grandmother persuaded her to
756 at least consent to the first phases of this training program, that of learning to
868 identify in their natural habitat the various floral medicines which her mother
824 used in doctoring.

The Middle Years

115 Sanapia left school when she was fourteen years old, and her activities
159 for the next three years were in the main involved with the training program her
756 mother and uncle had established to teach Sanapia all she would need to know to
868 become an eagle doctor. By her seventeenth year Sanapia had successfully com-
[871] pleted her training and possessed all the skills, knowledge, and supernatural powers
[582] which she would employ in doctoring after she passed menopause. During the period of training her mother had dissuaded her from marriage so that she would